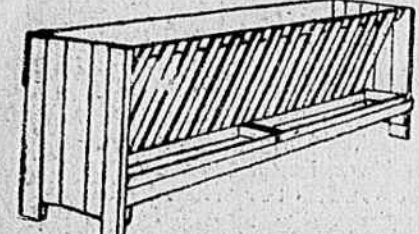


Weekly Bureau of Information for All Who Till the Soil or Are Interested in Making Homes

MORE SHEEP SHOULD BE RAISED IN OLD VIRGINIA

Sheep husbandry should receive more attention from the farmers of Virginia and the South than it does at the present time. On many farms there are no sheep at all. On many others the size of the flock could and should be increased, and more attention given to this branch of farming with resulting profit to the owner.

The various phases of the sheep industry afford numerous channels through which the skill of the producer can display itself. The breeding of pure-bred stock offers special inducements to many, while a larger number are content with the production of mutton and wool for market purposes. In the breeding of pure-bred stock the beginner has a number of valuable breeds from which he can make a selection. It is not so much the breed selected that will lead to success as it is the care and management. It must be noted, however, that certain breeds have a wider range of adaptability and are more popular than others. The number of pure-bred flocks is increasing every year, and the demand for good breeding stock is more

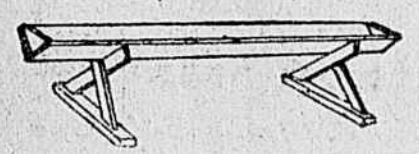


Combination rack for feeding hay and grain. It is so constructed that the grain troughs may be pulled back and feed put in them without entering the pen.

than keeping pace with the increase. Pure-bred stock has a number of advantages over grades. The natural or inherent advantages of pure-bred stock arise from the fact that there has been a concerted effort in the development of the better breeds to establish, intensify and perpetuate their superior qualities by using only the best animals for breeding purposes. There have been some exceptions to this, some inferior animals have been entered, but the formation of a breed has in general been based upon superiority in some form. Nevertheless, owing to the reappearance of inferior individuals, not all pure-bred sheep are suitable to retain in the flock.

A breeder of pure-bred sheep can develop a reputation that never could be acquired with grades. The sales of pedigree breeding stock extend over much wider range of territory than those of market stock. The show ring also spreads abroad the fame of the breeder of pure-bred stock. Larger prices are obtained for pure-bred ewes and rams when sold for breeding purposes, although it costs little more to produce them after the flock is once established. There is also more stability in their values than in those of market stock.

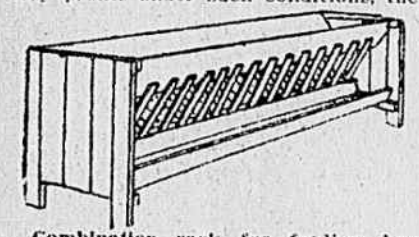
With a commercial flock there are several phases that are worthy of con-



Y-shaped grain trough. This type is extensively used and is objectionable on account of the large amount of feed that is thrown out and wasted.

sideration. Early spring lambs is one of the most important phases of the spring or early lamb raising. The production of winter or so-called "hothouse" lambs is well worth undertaking by those who are favorably situated, and should prove profitable under favorable conditions.

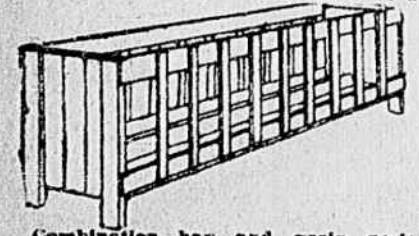
Many farmers have disposed of their flocks and many others have refrained from entering the business because of some of the difficulties that are peculiar to this industry. Among the most important of these are cur dog, parasites and diseases. A certain amount of trouble is inevitable where these abound, but ordinarily this should not be sufficient to discourage the flockmaster. Good management and proper care, with control, if not elimination, of these difficulties, if the flock that suffers most from these sources. Sheep are scavengers, but should not be made to subsist upon weeds alone, with little or no attention on the part of the farmer. The sooner the owner realizes that his sheep cannot return satisfactory profits under such conditions, the



Combination rack for feeding hay and grain. Sheep can be fed from either side. Note construction for keeping chaff out of feeders, by the solid board at the top.

better it will be for him. Any extra care and feed given to the flock generally yields the greatest return.

Sheep will increase the fertility of the soil if they are handled properly. To do this they should not be permitted to crop off the grass too closely, which they will do if the pasture is overstocked or if they are kept too long on one field. Sheep manure, with one exception, is the most valuable of all farm manures. It is thin and evenly scattered over the ground and does not produce a rank growth in spots of the pasture, as do other manures. The manure is also worked into the soil by the sharp hoofs of the sheep, so that it is not washed away, but becomes available as plant food. This quality has well earned for sheep the title of "golden hoof." In England, with the reign of Queen Elizabeth's reign produced only six bushels of wheat per acre has been made to yield thirty bushels at the present time by the use of sheep. Better cultural methods may be the cause of a



Combination hay and grain rack. Sheep can feed from either side.

portion of this increase, but without doubt the sheep are responsible for the greater part of it.

Another equally important way that

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT

All inquiries and communications addressed to The Times-Dispatch will receive prompt attention. This department will appear each Monday, except on holidays, and suggestions will be welcomed.

Facts for Farmers, Stock Breeders, Poultry Raisers, Orchardists, Truckers and Gardeners—Queries and Answers

BOYS' CORN CLUB WORK AND ITS GREAT VALUE

If we mistake not, the Boys' Corn Club movement started in Virginia. It is now becoming nation-wide. Professor O. H. Benson, in urging an enlargement in the West, throws out some valuable hints and information that may be useful in the South. He says:

It is a well-established fact that both play and contest interests perform a very important part in the process of education, and have much to do in creating efficiency for man in the equation of social and industrial life.

The corn-club work is a very important factor in the economy of the farm in directing boys who live in rural districts in the business as a profitable and noble profession. The way in which the club work takes hold of a boy is quite remarkable, and from the enthusiasm created by the club work and contests, greater interest in farm life is sure to develop.

We need the boys for the present economy of the farm, and we must have their work, their leadership, and their influence for the future if American agriculture and rural interests are to endure and contribute as they should to human comfort and prosperity.

The purpose of this article is to suggest lines of interest and instruction in addition to the regular club work, which has to do with the acre yield at a reasonable cost of production. These club contests may well be taken up in connection with the rural and village schools; county, district, and State fairs; farmers' institutes and educational gatherings, with a view to giving direction and interest as well as important training during the entire year. The club contests will enable both teacher and parent to win the boy for better things in needed education and efficient farm life. Much could be said about the influence of this kind of work on actual production and land values.

Boys' corn-club work should be constructive and permanent, and in order that it may be so, the following lines of contest work are suggested to the club membership. These contests should offer some relaxation from the main line of work, and should be practical and recreational as well as instructive. The following are a few of the objects of corn-club contests:

- (1) To increase members' interest in corn in all of its import phases.
- (2) To secure better seed corn and consequently better yields. (All seed should be returned to the exhibitors.)
- (3) To give industrial activity and practice to club members for the entire year.
- (4) To give members greater interest in club work through combined play and contest methods.
- (5) To furnish profitable diversion to the boys during the otherwise idle



Two Corn-Club Boys Discussing the Merits of Ears of Seed Corn.

hours of play time and vacation periods. "An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure."

To stimulate interest in the contests the following premiums would be most suitable:

- (1) Free trips and expenses paid to district and State fairs, educational institutions, chautauques, etc.
- (2) Top buggy, saddle, gold watch, automobile, etc.
- (3) Clear title to one or more acres of land (to encourage land ownership).
- (4) Farm implements, tools, equipment, etc.
- (5) Thoroughbred pigs, cattle, horses, mules, pens of chickens.
- (6) Club emblems, banners and pennants.
- (7) Manual training workbench, set of tools, cameras, trunk, leather hand bag, writing desk, etc.
- (8) Poultry equipment, such as incubators, watering and feed troughs, brooders, fences and pens.
- (9) Free tuition to short courses in agricultural and mechanical colleges and regular courses in colleges.
- (10) Canvas tent, camp outfit, canoe, hunting equipment, baseball suit, sets of clothes.
- (11) Dictionary, encyclopedia, set of agricultural books, special club library, series of books of standard literature.
- (12) Subscription to farm journals, magazines for special periodicals for boys.

Every premium offered for contests and club work should have for its main object the promotion and encouragement of the work. The premiums



Boy holding corn ear.

should represent the greatest need and interest of the corn-club membership; the most desired and broad viewpoint of the club work and encourage both members and leaders to be progressive and constructive in their work, and it should serve to increase the club members' interest and respect for farm life.

Club leaders, county superintendents, teachers and others interested in promoting agricultural and rural home interests should see no opportunity to have club exhibits and interests recognized effectively at county, district and State fairs, county farmers' institutes, short courses, and teachers' associations are excellent mediums for promoting club work, and an exhibit of club products, special contests, essays and general discussions on phases of the work should occupy some place and time during the regular sessions. Do not wait for an invitation to submit club interests, but proceed at once to make and present your plans to the proper officials, such as the secretary, the president and the various committees. Most of these will be glad to recognize the boys and girls in their work and club interests in every way possible.

The poultry section is a very important part of the farm, and the poultry raiser should be interested in the progress toward normal conditions.

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The Poultry Section

CONSIDER AGE OF PIGEONS

The squab business is getting to be quite an important industry in many parts of Virginia. Therefore, a little information in the Agricultural Department on the pigeon subject is worth while.

Pigeons are considered to be at their prime when three years old, and there are very few pairs that pay for their feed after they are seven years old. They depreciate in value with age.

Professional dealers in pigeons have been known to buy old pairs for from 80 to 70 cents and then sell them to the unsuspicious purchaser as guaranteed mated birds at several dollars.



Red Carnean Pigeon, Weight One Pound Three Ounces.

A pair. For this reason a person should buy pigeons only from some dealer in whom he is personally acquainted, or from some one who is willing to guarantee not only as to the birds being mated, but also as to age. The fanciers are, as a rule, more delicate than the market men, and young pigeons, and when buying young birds the purchaser is quite likely to find among them many more males than females. Not only is it essential to have nothing but mated birds in the loft, but they should be from good, hardy stock. Some breeders have been known to force their stock to such an extent that they have lowered the vitality. Others are surrounded by conditions that it is impossible to produce good, vigorous birds. While some select their larger squabs for market and keep the smaller birds, which would sell for a much lower figure as market squabs, let them grow, and sell them later as breeders.

Great care should be taken in the purchase of stock to know that it is from lofts where there is no vermin. It is next to impossible to get lice out of the loft when the flock once gets thoroughly infested, and the introduction of one or two dirty pigeons will very soon cause such a condition. Flocks will be found where there is a tendency toward roup, canker and other diseases, and these must be avoided if success is to be secured. Owners of flocks that have been infested are generally anxious to dispose of them, and dealers have been known to purchase these goods and, after a little doctoring, offer them for sale, being careful to say, "They are mated birds and in the prime of condition." It is such experience as this that cause many to have ill luck from the beginning; in fact, they failed before they had really begun.

DON'T OVERDO THE THING

Don't try to winter more birds than you have house room for, or time to care for. Overloaded houses are sure to become damp, while hens will not lay when overcrowded. And don't let the roosters remain in the house. They kill egg production. They are

food consumers and nonproducers. Don't keep more than you will need for spring use.

IN THE CHICKEN YARD

See that all the layers are supplied with nests. In the best equipped house seventy-five nests are allowed for 100 hens. Keep the nests clean and renew nesting material often.

Good layers are great eaters. A bird must have capacity to eat and digest a great amount of food if she is to lay a great amount of eggs.

Don't let the hens sleep underneath the roosts. If a stray rat should get in there, he will be on less than. And the air is much better up higher. If these floor-sleepers contract colds, the whole flock will be off for the winter.

Steady, everyday feeding is what counts most in the final summing up of the year's business.

It is poor policy to change the quarters of hens or pullets when laying, for it usually checks or stops egg production.

That hens must be fed and fed liberally if one expects eggs in large quantities, especially winter eggs.

Never expose fowls in blustery weather. Hens lay a few more eggs when males are not used in the pens with them.

Figures Worth Studying. The best authorities agree that the total of the crops raised from seed in the United States might be doubled by improved methods of farming. This would add \$1,000,000,000 to \$2,000,000,000 to the nation's wealth.

The resources of its farm population. And one of the most important means to this end is the planting of good seed.

Value of Skimmed Milk. An Illinois farmer who raises his own calves says he counts skim milk worth from 50 to 60 cents per hundred pounds.

Can sell the milk net him that price per hundred pounds. He has considered calves he figures it worth double these prices.

PROGRESS TOWARD NORMAL CONDITIONS

Date for Final Removal of All Barriers to Stock Trading Remains

NEW YORK, December 6.—Developments during the week indicated steady progress toward the resumption of normal conditions in security markets.

The date for the final removal of all barriers to free trading remained more or less obscure, however. Rumors that the Exchange authorities intended soon to quote prices on stocks as they quote bond prices met with prompt denial. It was said, however, that it was not likely until the situation in London assumed a more favorable aspect.

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wheat surplus is inadequate.

It is reported that Italy has made enormous purchases of wheat in that country, but whether the Italians will be able to move their grain out of Argentina is a problem.

It is estimated that the world's carrying capacity on the ocean is 35 per cent less than normal, and the foreign trade of the world is being hampered by the war.

Another drawback to the shipments of wheat out of Argentina is the apprehension of Argentina that the United States will be unable to ship much wheat to the allies unless the activity of the vessels of the Kaiser are checked.

It is a noticeable fact that the importing nations of the world are well posted as to the movement of war vessels in the neighborhood of the Argentine Republic, and that they believe that considerable trouble will be experienced in bringing the wheat now being prepared for shipment out of that part of the world. Conditions are the making of a purchase of wheat abroad, and that the countries are now depending upon the United States for supplies of grain, and that the countries are now depending upon the United States for supplies of grain, and that the countries are now depending upon the United States for supplies of grain.

The bulk of wheat have a last made in the United States for supplies of grain in Western markets were to fall off sharply. Receipts last week were only 14,740,000 bushels, compared with 12,740,000 bushels the week before and 7,940,000 bushels for the corresponding week a year ago.

Shipments from Western markets last week were 10,600,000 bushels, or 1,000,000 bushels larger than the same week last year. The highest weekly sale to date at Western points were 295,385,000 bushels, while for the corresponding time last year they were 292,709,000 bushels.

It is predicted by men who are well posted on conditions that there will be a further falling off in the movement of wheat, as those holding this grain advance the opinion that higher prices would cause a curtailment of the movement of wheat within the next few months.

Corn receipts were larger last week at 12,140,000 bushels at Western points, compared with 5,300,000 bushels for the corresponding time last year. The receipts for November 1 at primary markets were 32,599,000 bushels, compared with 17,418,000 bushels a year ago. The highest weekly sale to date at Western points were 295,385,000 bushels, while for the corresponding time last year they were 292,709,000 bushels.

Provisions were a little more active during the last week, and when the big run of hogs at Western markets is considered, the situation may be called strong in the provision pit.

Property remaining unsold at Coeburn, Va., will be offered for public auction in front of the post-office there, beginning at 10 A. M. Wednesday, December 17, 1914.

Property at Wise Courthouse will be offered for sale in front of the courthouse beginning at 10 A. M. Thursday, December 17, 1914.

All sales subject to confirmation of court. Complete list of property furnished on application. TERMS: Cash. W. E. BARNETT, Trustee, Newport News, Va.

The right is reserved to reject any or all bids.

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